News release

Exceptionally warm extended summer 2006

16 October 2006

Climate variability scientists at the Met Office have revealed that this year's extended summer period has been the warmest on the long standing Central England Temperature (CET) record.

The record that dates back to 1659 is the longest instrumental temperature record in the world and May to September 2006 has been warmer than any equivalent period since then.

Top 20 warmest extended summers chart

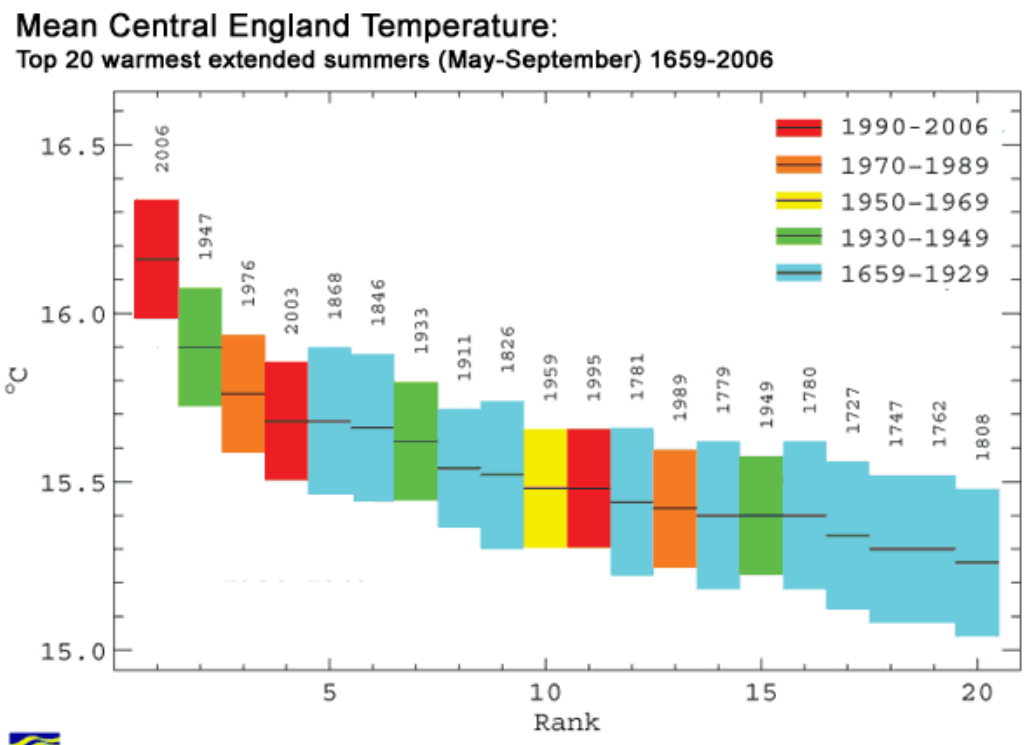
The mean temperature of 16.2 °C for the period was 2 °C warmer than the average for 1961-1990. The previous record of 15.9 °C was set in 1947. The 2006 period included the warmest month ever, July, and a record temperature for September.

Extended summer anomolies chart

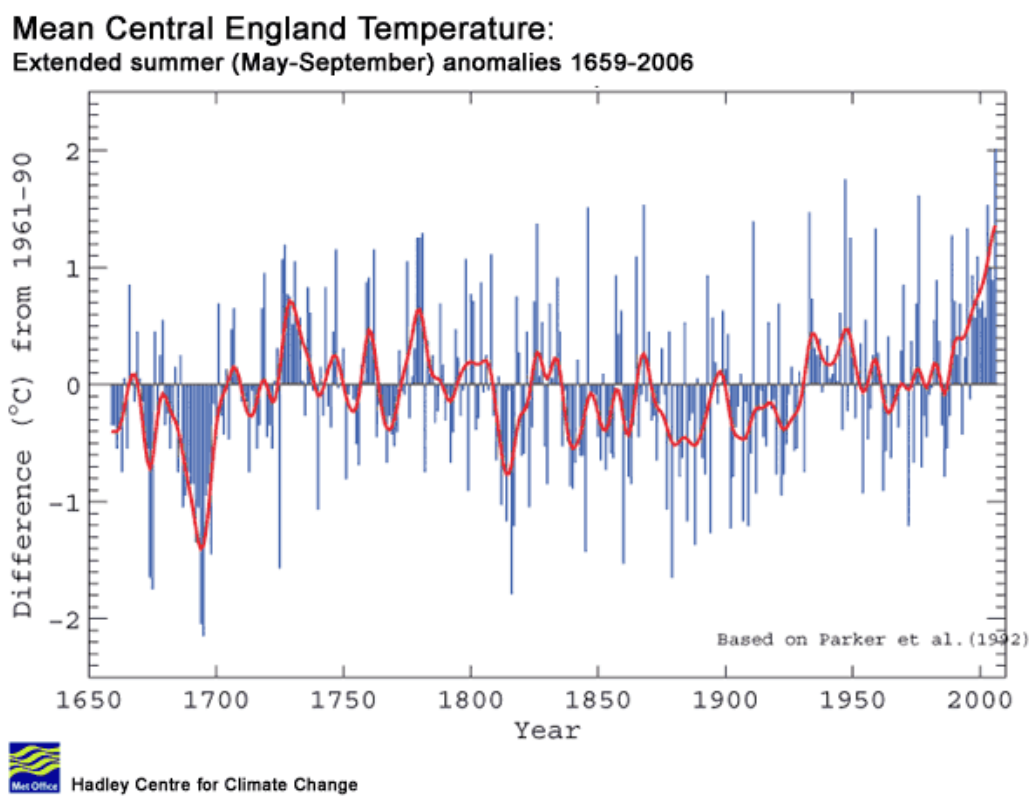
In addition to the CET, more detailed statistics for the last 93 years (1914-2006) show that May to September was the warmest for all areas of the country.

The observed Central England temperatures are consistent with recent findings by Prof. David Karoly of the University of Oklahoma and Dr Peter Stott of the Met Office Hadley Centre. Their research showed the recent rapid warming of the CET is almost certainly due to human influence - the first time this has been rigorously identified on such a small geographic scale.

More about CET



In the plot above, there is a 95% likelihood that the values fall within the ranges of the bars. Longer bars represent early years with less reliable measurements.



Notes

The Central England Temperature is homogenised to remove instrument error and urban influence.

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